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VOLUME XXVII, No. 2.

FEBRUARY 2005.

# **THESE NAUGHTY BOYS ISSUED PHONEY MONEY**

From "The American Legion Weekly"

February 23, 1923

(submitted by Joe Usibelli)

## **These Naughty Boys Issued Phoney Money**

THOMAS ALFRED ROSS, JR., Legion Post of Nome, Alaska, has recently had printed for its use spurious money to the face value of \$1,950,000. Moreover, in its conspiracy the post was aided and abetted by National Adjutant Lemuel Bolles and by National Headquarters of The American Legion. "If this be treason, make the most of it."

The explanation of this apparently gigantic fraud against the United States Government lies in the fact that Thomas Alfred Ross, Jr., Post wanted the fake money for use in the annual Frontier Night celebration. When the post had difficulty in finding a printer in Alaska equipped to handle the job, an appeal for help was sent to Legion National Headquarters at Indianapolis. Connections were made with a printer and the phoney money was rushed through to Seattle in time to catch the last mail of the season.

The smallest denomination of the fake bills is one hundred dollars and they run as high as a thousand dol-

lars. In Alaska during the time of the gold rush anything less than a hundred dollars was regarded as mere chicken feed. The bills bear on the front the legend, "American Legion Frontier Night," together with pictures of an Eskimo, of a team of huskies pulling a sledge, and of a reindeer.

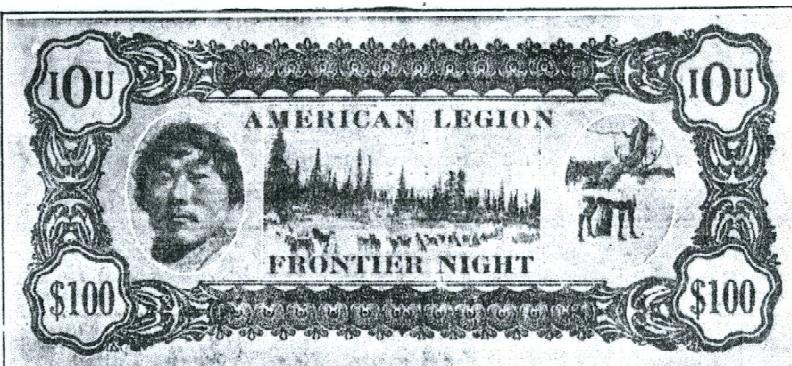
Frontier Night has been an annual affair at Nome for a number of years. Since the Legion first took charge of it three years ago it has become, according to Post Adjutant Frank Dufresne, "the most popular evening of the whole social season." Incidentally it has proved decidedly profitable to the treasury of Thomas Alfred Ross, Jr., Post. It

is a reproduction of the wild days of 1899 "as near as modern laws and the Eighteenth Amendment will allow." The affair is widely advertised throughout the northwestern part of Alaska Territory and attracts many old sourdoughs and pioneers from distant creeks and camps.

The fake money is used in gambling, the chief spare-time activity of the

oldtime prospectors. Poker, faro, black jack and all the other mental recreations of the sourdough run full blast. Thousands of dollars (printed in three colors but of no value) change hands on the turn of a card. The play is in the hands of old-time dealers.

Thomas Alfred Ross, Jr., Post has firmly established the reputation of The American Legion in Nome and the vicinity. Post Adjutant Dufresne in a letter to National Headquarters reported, "We of the far north are red-hot Legionnaires and in spite of difficulties have made our organization a family word for honor and good things in this section."



One hundred dollars—but just try to spend it outside of Nome



This note, supplied by Joe Usibelli, differs from the note illustrated with the article. It does not bear the "IOU" in the upper corners. The front of this note is green with red overprint (numbers and "American Legion Frontier Night"). The back is orange, with red overprint (numbers). Actual size is 176mm by 78mm.

North of 60°

South of 50°

# EDITOR'S COMMENTS

This issue is a bit larger than usual, but we did not think you would mind. Paper takes up a lot of room even when it is reduced in size.

This issue highlights some of the innumerable paper and cardboard items that have served as a medium of exchange, money substitute, good for coupons or propaganda that looks like money! Many of these pieces were offered on eBay recently by Kaye Dethridge and provide a very neat assortment of items.

Our front page is graced by an article that originally ran in "The American Legion Weekly," recently offered on eBay. Joe Uisisbelli was kind enough to provide a copy for our use.

John Kallman provides some background on the use of military mess tokens, and a little personal experience.

Prices realized from eBay over the holidays seem subdued. Many items sold only for their opening bid, and many others went unsold. The prices on the two Dawson tokens was disappointing.

We have been looking over old issues of "The Alaska Journal" and have found some interesting items that we will bring you in coming months. However, we are always in need of fresh material, and welcome submissions of articles, space fillers, items for the record, and downright pieces of trivia! Without your help, this publication gets stale.

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**Alaskan Token Collector & Polar Numismatist**, published 10 times per year, is a publication of Alaska Rare Coins. All articles remain the property of the authors and may not be reprinted without their consent.

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# PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

<b>Anchorage</b> , Cheechako, 12½¢, B-11biv	15.00OB
<b>Anchorage</b> , The Club	27.00
<b>Bering River</b> , Hoonah Pkg., 10¢	96.00
<b>Brooks</b> , Pioneer Pool, 25¢, B-5a	327.12
<b>Chatanika</b> , Dempsey Hotel, 25¢, B-3a	OB25.00NB
<b>Chichagoff</b> , C. Club, 12½¢, B-1b	10.50
<b>Chitina</b> , Navada Bar, 12½¢, B-4a	95.00OB
<b>Circle</b> , Collins & Strait, 10¢, B-1a	OB175.00NB
<b>Cordova</b> , The Club, 25¢, B-10a	OB30.00NB
<b>Dillingham</b> , Bradford, 5¢, b-1a	OB145.00NB
<b>Fairbanks</b> , Masonic Penny, B-33b	255.50
<b>Fairbanks</b> , Pioneer Hotel, 5¢, B-45a	22.73
<b>False Pass</b> , Harris, 5¢, B-1a	255.00
<b>Fort Yukon</b> , Carter, 50¢, B-3c	227.50
<b>Haines</b> , Brouilette, 10¢, B-3a	95.00OB
<b>Juneau</b> , J. Liquor, 6¼¢, B-39ai	408.12
<b>Juneau</b> , Mecca, 6¼¢, B-50b	OB150.00NB
<b>Juneau</b> , Diamond S, 6¼¢, B-64a	95.00OB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Abercrombies, 8¢, B-1c	OB8.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , BPOE, 12½¢, B-5a	62.00
<b>Ketchikan</b> , BPOE, 12½¢, B-5a	OB95.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Finzel's, 5¢, B-15aii	109.87
<b>Ketchikan</b> , The Mint, 12½¢, B-33a	25.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , TM Pioneer, 25¢, B-46bi	25.00OB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Qual Bak., 1 sm. If. B-48a	OB24.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Scandia, 5¢, B-55a	OB75.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Scoug's, \$1, B-56d	OB40.00NB
<b>Ketchikan</b> , Stedman, 25¢, B-60c i-iii	35.00OB
<b>Kodiak</b> , B&B, 12½¢, B-1a	175.00OB
<b>McCarthy</b> , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	OB30.00NB
<b>McCarthy</b> , Golden Hotel, 12½¢, B-2a	OB15.00NB
<b>Mt. Village</b> , Sheppard Trd., set of 6	OB80.00NB
<b>Nome</b> , New Lincoln, 50¢, B-36a	21.82
<b>Palmer</b> , ARRC, 10¢, B-1c	49.99OB
<b>(Petersburg)</b> , OK's Place, B-7a	OB45.00NB
<b>Port Alexander</b> , Pastime, 5¢, B-5a	OB30.00NB
<b>Quinhagak</b> , Jean, B-1d	35.00OB
<b>Savoonga</b> , R.C.Co., B-1 set of 8	OB90.00NB
<b>Seward</b> , Northern, 12½¢, B-8bii	OB95.00NB
<b>Seward</b> , Northern, 12½¢, B-8bii	RLOB95.00NB
<b>Seward</b> , Northern, 12½¢, B-8bii ??	22.06
<b>Seward</b> , Northern, 12½¢, B-8bii	OB30.00NB
<b>Skagway</b> , Idaho Saloon, 10¢, B-14a	OB26.00NB
<b>Skagway</b> , Mascot, 12½¢, B-17c	OB25.00NB
<b>Dawson</b> , YT, B&M, 12½¢	21.62
<b>Dawson</b> , YT, Dewey & Jensen, 12½¢	39.83
<b>AYPE</b> , ¼ DWT, 1909	150.06
<b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	OB360.00NB
<b>AYPE</b> , 1 DWT, 1909	180.50
<b>Tierra Del Fuego</b> , Popper 1 Gramo	OB875.00NB
<b>Tierra Del Fuego</b> , Sprg Hill 50¢	RLOB£400.00NB
<b>Tierra Del Fuego</b> , Sprg Hill 50¢	RLOB£299.00NB
<b>Tierra Del Fuego</b> , Est. 1y2	RLOB£50.00NB
<b>Tierra Del Fuego</b> , Est. 1y2	RL£39.99OB

OB = Opening Bid NB = No Bid RL = relist

RNM = Reserve Not Met R = Reserve

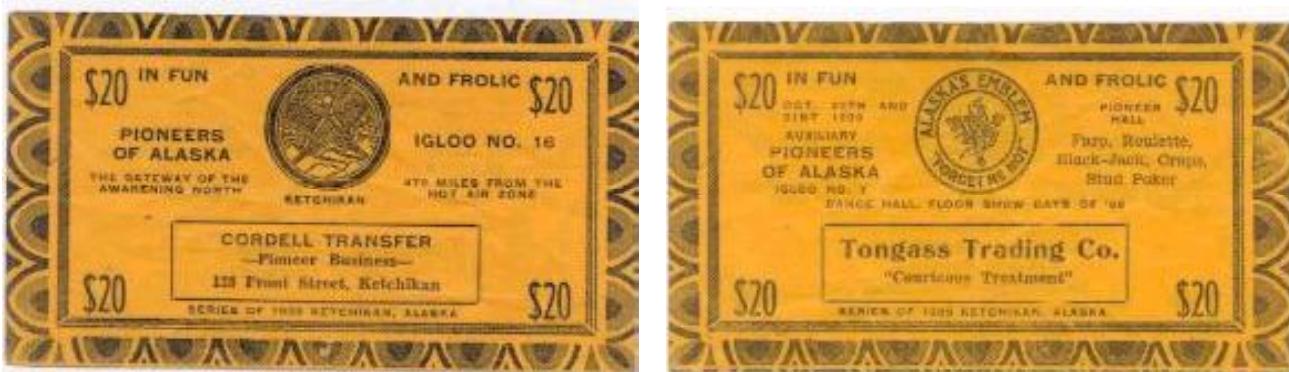
BIN = Buy it now

# KETCHIKAN PIONEERS OF ALASKA

Shown below and on the next page are five \$20 notes in Fun and Frolic, series of 1939, issued by the Pioneers of Alaska Igloo No. 16 and the Auxiliary (woman's) Pioneers of Alaska Igloo No. 7. Approximate size is 119mm by 68mm, all with black printing. Colors and businesses represented respectively are: 1) yellow, Petersen and Rockhill and Log Cabin Grocery; 2) pale green, Morrell's Liquor Store and Log Cabin Bakery; 3) pale yellow, Revilla Theatre and Alaska Cab; 4) pink, Music Store and Walker's Drug Store (eBay PR 156.62); and 5) golden rod, Cordell Transfer and Tongass Trading Co. (eBay PR 207.50). Items 1 through 3 will be offered for sale by Alaska Rare Coins.



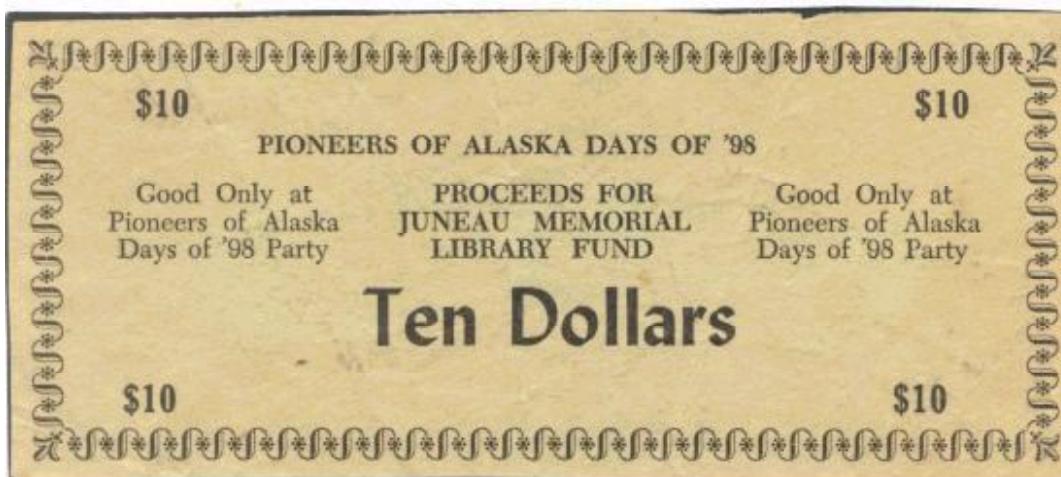
# KETCHIKAN PIONEERS, CONT.



## MORE SPECIAL EVENT CURRENCY



**ANCHORAGE:** Pioneer Open House, December 15, 1945. The Days of '98, Community Building. Actual size 134mm by 72mm, All black printing. \$5 pink, \$10 blue and \$20 tan (eBay PR 157.62).

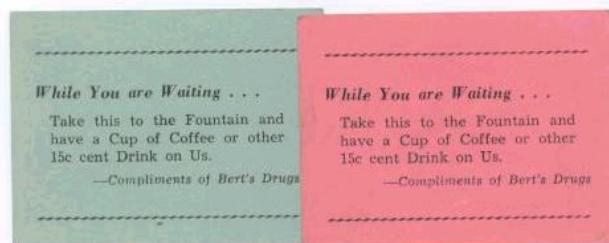


**JUNEAU:** Pioneers of Alaska Days of '98, Proceeds for Juneau Memorial Library Fund. Black on tan, 140mm by 62mm (eBay PR 105.62).

# PAPER POTPOURRI



**(ANCHORAGE):** Alaska Coin Club, 5 Anniversary, This entitles the bearer to one 1 hellacious good time. Dark green on pale green, 204 by 93mm (reduced), eBay PR \$15.56.



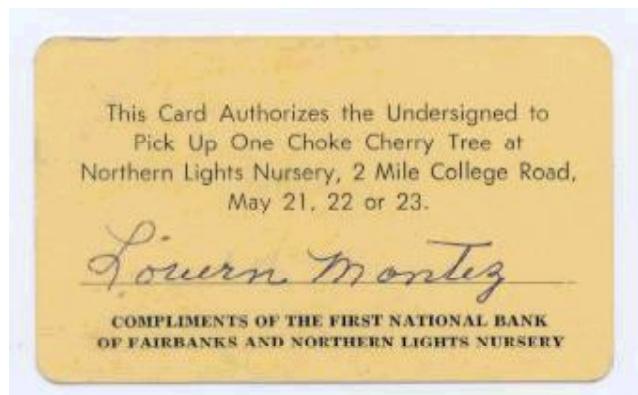
**(ANCHORAGE):** Bert's Drugs, "While you are waiting... Take this to the Fountain and have a Cup of Coffee or other 15¢ cent Drink on Us. Black on pink and pale green, 77 by 58mm (reduced). A blue card is listed as B-8a. Perhaps the green is blue? The pair, eBay PR \$16.82



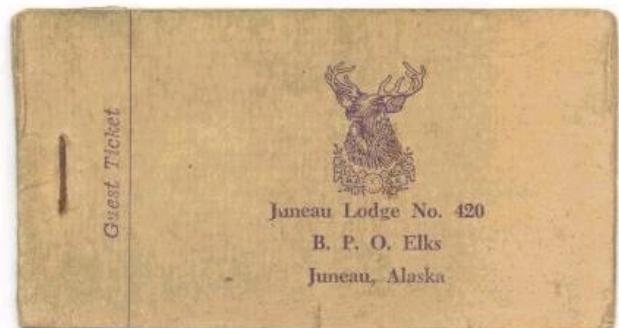
**(ANCHORAGE):** Centennial Square Merchants, One Nugget Buck, August 30, 1967. Red on golden rod paper, 184 by 90mm (reduced), eBay PR 7.16.



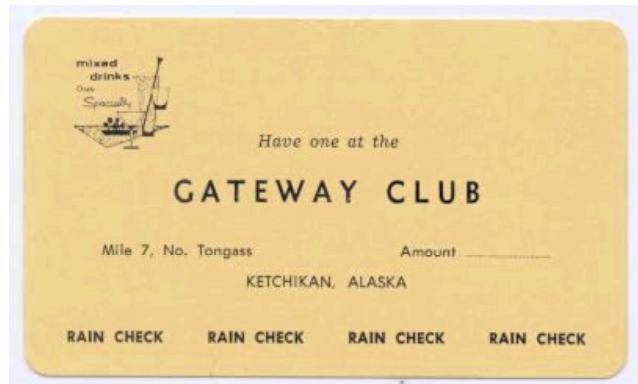
**ANCHORAGE:** Pizza Huts of Anchorage, One Buck. Black on green, 163 by 68mm (reduced), eBay PR 7.09.



**FAIRBANKS:** First National Bank of Fairbanks and Northern Lights Nursery, one choke cherry tree. Black on pale yellow, 98 by 59mm (reduced), eBay PR 13.62.



**JUNEAU:** Juneau Lodge No. 429, B.P.O. Elks. Guest Ticket booklet. Purple on tan, 104 by 56mm (reduced), eBay PR \$12.62.



**KETCHIKAN:** Gateway Club, "Have one at the". Black on cream, 93 by 62mm (reduced), eBay PR \$18.38.

All items on this page and the next page courtesy of Kaye Dethridge.

# PAPER POTPOURRI, CONT.



**KETCHIKAN:** Heritage Lounge Raincheck, good for one cocktail. Black on white, 89 by 51mm (reduced), eBay PR \$8.58.



**KETCHIKAN:** Mecca, Rain Check. Black on white, 93 by 62mm (reduced), eBay PR \$10.49.



**KENAI:** Harborview Hotel, Buoy Room, Rain Check, good for one free drink. Purple on white, 89 by 51mm (reduced), eBay PR 6.75.



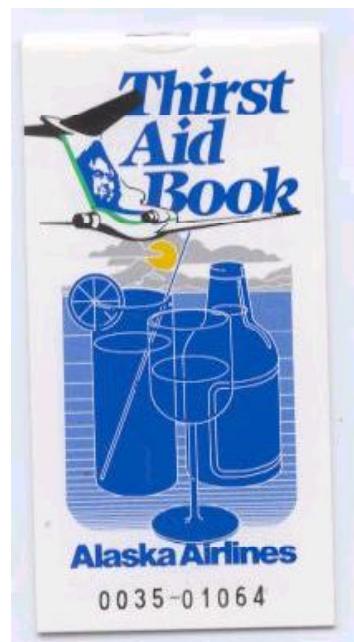
**(SITKA?):** Pelican Seafoods Inc., Steamer Coupon Good for One. Black on white, 110 by 55mm (reduced), eBay PR \$22.37 (illustrated at the bottom of the left column).



**SITKA:** Sitka Sound Seafoods, one free drink. Black on white, 88 by 50mm (reduced), eBay PR 6.75.



**SOUTHEAST (JUNEAU?, SITKA?):** Southeast Senior Services meal ticket book. Black on yellow, 140 by 50mm (reduced).

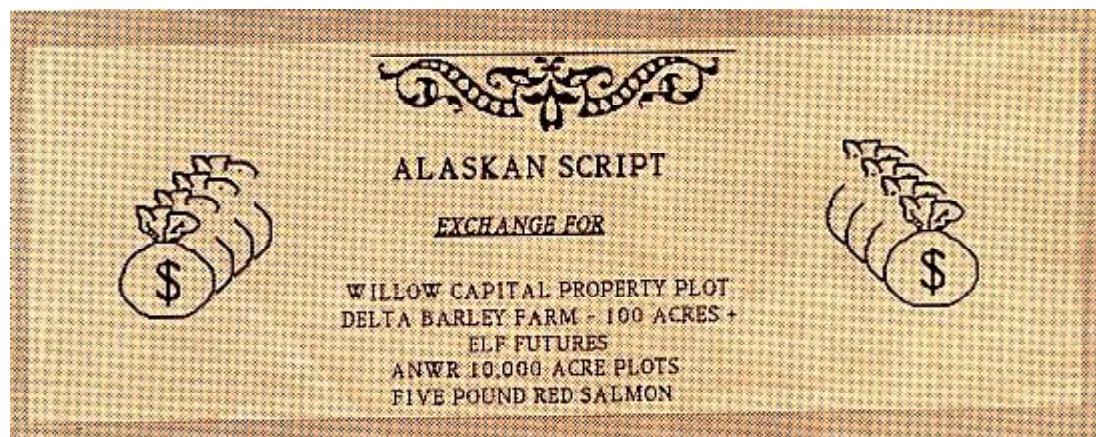


**ALASKA AIRLINES:** Thirst Aid Book. For beverages on Alaska Airlines flights. Blue, black and yellow on white, 58 by 114mm (reduced), eBay PR \$14.25.

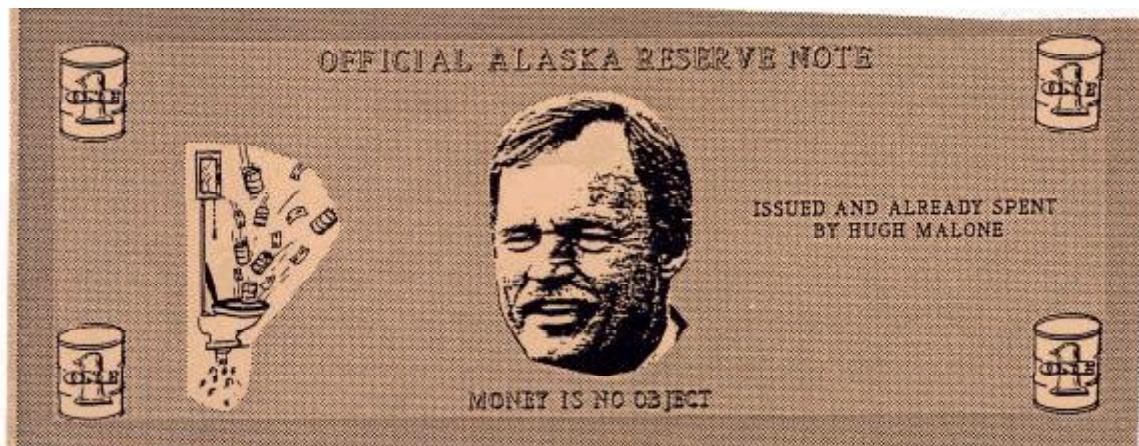
# POLITICAL PAPER POTPOURRI



**ALASKA:** Legislative Promissory Note, Earl D. Hillstrand, 900 Million. Promotes saving the Permanent Fund. Dark green on white, 165 by 63mm (submitted by Kaye Dethridge), eBay PR \$7.16.



**ALASKA:** Alaskan Script, Exchange for: Willow Capital Property Plot; Delta Barley Farm - 100+ acres; ELF Futures; ANWR 10,000 Acre Plots; Five Pound Red Salmon. Compares some of the “pie in the sky” state projects to a five pound red salmon. Black and brown on yellow, size not reported (submitted by Ken Rieck).



**ALASKA:** Official Alaska Reserve Note, Issued and Already Spent by Hugh Malone. Portrait of former Alaska governor Steve Cowper, “Money is no Object.” Black and brown on brown size not reported (submitted by Ken Rieck).

# MESS TOKEN USAGE



Bob Lyall of England asked a question that I could not answer: How were the mess tokens in the last issue used?

Well, I did not know, so I emailed John Kallman of Cash Coin Connection. I found John's response interesting, and quite amusing.

"Tokens had two basic purposes: Credit issues and slot machines. The slot machines were taken out of the clubs mid-way through the Vietnam war due to large scale graft and corruption. They are back in the clubs now, but they only take US coins, in most cases. I know of a \$1.00 token that was issued for Misawa AB Japan that was in use until they got a supply of SBA dollar coins, but that is the exception rather than the rule.

"Depending upon your rank, you could borrow (interest free) a certain amount of money in tokens between paydays (repayable by the next payday). You could use the tokens then to purchase either food or drink. In some cases the waitress in the bar areas would purchase \$10.00 worth of tokens for \$9.00 so that you could have some folding cash for use off base.

"Chit books were used for the same purposes (except for the slot machine use.

"I recall using tokens while in Korea during the mid 70s, but do you think I kept any? Why of course not!

"As an aside, while the club card for the most part has replaced the use of tokens to a great extent, some are still being issued as it lessens paperwork. Thus, for example, while you can charge a single drink to your club card (the same way you would charge something to your credit card), many clubs have found that for smaller purchases that tokens still work more effectively. Thus, while I was still in Japan, they were still issuing \$1.00 tokens to be used primarily for drink purposes.

"Of course, with the way any government organization

works, you could not purchase the tokens, but rather you had to charge them. They had a teller's window where you could pay your club dues, cash checks or convert currency (dollars to yen). You could also charge club tokens to your account.

"While I no longer needed to use tokens for credit purposes, when every new token came out, I would want to purchase a quantity for my customers who did collect them.

"I would go to the window and ask if I could buy some. The answer was always no - they can only be charged. Then I would ask to charge X amount. After filling out all the paperwork and getting the tokens, I would then ask to pay my club bill for the tokens that I had just purchased. They would give me a funny look and say why would you want to do that? I told them that I had just asked if I could buy the tokens and they had told me no, so I charged them and now I wanted to pay my bill.

"Thus followed another set of paperwork needed to pay the debt I just incurred! This would happen each and every time that I wanted some more tokens. You would think that after a while they would get the idea, but it never happened in the three years that I was there."

John also pointed out that I had transposed captions on the front page of the last newsletter. The "794th" is Cape Newenham and the "719th" is Sparrevohn.

Since the modern military tokens do not sell for much, we usually do not report on them in our prices realized. Below are a few that we have seen on eBay recently.

## MILITARY TOKENS

<b>Cape Newenham, 25¢, B-1f</b>	OB15.00NB
<b>Cape Newenham, \$1, B-1j</b>	25.00OB
<b>Elmendorf AFB, NCO OM, \$1, B-2a</b>	7.38
<b>Indian Mt., 708NCO OM, 5¢, B-1ai</b>	OB1.99
<b>Indian Mt., 708 NCO OM, 10¢, B-1bi</b>	6.60
<b>Ladd AFB, 449th, 5¢, 10¢, B-2 a and b</b>	2.50
<b>Murphrey Dome, OM, 10¢, B-2b</b>	OB4.00NB
<b>Murphrey Dome, OM, 10¢ &amp; 25¢, B-2b,c</b>	6.00
<b>Murphrey Dome, NCO OM, 5¢, B-3a</b>	9.99OB
<b>Murphrey Dome, NCO OM, 25¢, B-3d</b>	OB9.99NB
<b>Shemya, NCO Club, 50¢, B-1c</b>	OB9.99NB
<b>Shemya, NCO OM, 50¢, B-2gi</b>	5.00
<b>Sparrevohn, 719th, 10¢, B-1d</b>	9.99OB

# ALASKA MILITARY CHALLENGE COINS



**ALASKA:** 3rd Operations Support Sqdn., Commander's Coin. Silver colored with black, blue and green(?) enamel.

**ELMENDORF AFB:** 3rd Medical Group, DSA, MDSS, MDDS, AMDS. Bronze with blue, red, black and green enamel.

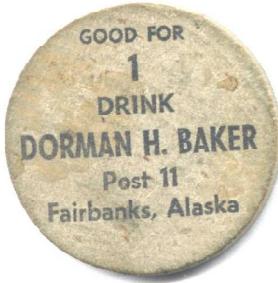


**EIELSON AFB:** 354th Security Forces Squadron, Iceman Defenders, Eielson Security Association. Silver colored with red, white, blue and yellow enamel.

**ELMENDORF AFB:** 19th Fighter Squadron, Gamecocks. Silver color with red, white, blue, yellow and black enamel.

**Editor's Note:** Challenge coins range is size from 38mm to 50mm and larger. Sizes were not reported on these, and it is assumed that these are in the 38 to 40mm range. All above items are from eBay.

## FOR THE RECORD



**FAIRBANKS:** (American Legion) Dorman Baker Post 11, 1 Drink. Black on wood.

**PRUDHOE BAY:** BP Exploration, Over 2 billion barrels served. One ounce silver, Alaska Mint.



**FAIRBANKS:** Triple K's Rest., Kay Duncan, Good for one coffee. Black on wood.

**TOK:** Farren's Grocery, worth 5¢ in trade, limit 1. Black on wood.